

Message Text

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TAGS: MARR, MPOL, NATO, GR, TU
SUBJECT: GREECE-NATO--DISCUSSIONS TO BEGIN IN BRUSSELS;
PLANNED EXERCISE PARTICIPATION REVEALED

REF: USNATO 1702 (DTG 181322Z FEB 78)

1. STORIES IN GREEK PRESS ON FEBRUARY 19 AND 21 DREW UPON "OFFICIAL NATO SOURCES" TO REPORT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN GREECE-NATO RELATIONS. INDEPENDENT (BUT USUALLY PRO-GOVERNMENT) CONSERVATIVE KATHIMERINI'S BRUSSELS-BASED CORRESPONDENT REVEALED THAT NATO HAS ACCEPTED GREEK PROPOSALS CONCERNING ACCELERATED NEGOTIATIONS TO DEFINE A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BY JUNE. LIBERAL, OPPOSITION TO VIMA FRONT-PAGED GREECE'S PLANNED PARTICIPATION IN NATO EXERCISE DAWN PATRO DURING THE LATTER PART OF MAY.

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2. KATHIMERINI SAID THAT SYG LUNS HAD CONSULTED WITH OTHER NATO MEMBERS ABOUT PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS' REQUEST IN LATE JANUARY TO SPEED UP THE PROCESS AND HAD NOW ACCEPTED GREECE'S PROPOSAL AS TO PACE AND FORM. "DIPLOMATIC OBSERVERS" WERE SAID TO SEE TWO OBJECTIVES IN THIS RECENT GREEK MOVE: (A) TO NEUTRALIZE ANY TURKISH ATTEMPT TO REPLACE GREECE IN

THOSE ROLES, SUCH AS CONTROL OF THE AEGEAN, THAT WERE LEFT OPEN WHEN GREECE WITHDREW IN 1974; AND (B) TO EXCLUDE THE CONNECTING OF GREECE-NATO MATTERS WITH THE PROBLEMS OF CYPRUS, EC ENTRY AND GREEK-TURKISH BILATERAL AFFAIRS. A SUBSEQUENT ARTICLE IN THE SAME PAPER REFERS WITHOUT SPECIFICITY TO THE "TURKISH OBJECTIONS" THAT HAVE RECENTLY BEEN OVERCOME SO THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS COULD BEGIN. COMMUNIST RIZOSPASTIS ADDS THAT A "RELIABLE GREEK SOURCE" CONFIRMED THERE HAD BEEN SOME PROGRESS," BUT THAT IT DID NOT NECESSARILY MEAN A SIGNED AGREEMENT BY JUNE.

3. GREECE'S DAWN PATROL PARTICIPATION, ACCORDING TO TO VIMA, WILL INCLUDE TEN SHIPS IN THE IONIAN AND AEGEAN SEAS ONLY, BUT NOT IN TURKISH WATERS. (LAST YEAR, THE ARTICLE POINTED OUT, THERE WAS NO GREEK PARTICIPATION, ALTHOUGH HER NAVY HAD A NATIONAL EXERCISE IN THE SAME AREA.) THE TURKS, ON THE OTHER HAND, WILL BE IN THE WHOLE EXERCISE FROM GIBRALTAR TO A REPORTED LANDING IN TURKISH THRACE IN CONJUNCTION WITH AMERICAN, BRITISH AND ITALIAN FORCES. THE PAPER INDICATED THAT SECRET NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE ON WHO WILL EXERCISE COMMAND IN THE AEGEAN, BUT SPECULATED IT IS LIKELY THAT A U.S. ADMIRAL WILL BE GENERALLY IN CONTROL WITH EACH COUNTRY COMMANDING THE FORCES ENGAGED IN THE EXERCISE WITHIN ITS RESPECTIVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TERRITORIAL WATERS. TO VIMA'S SOURCES INDICATED THAT GREECE, "IN ALL PROBABILITY," WILL PARTICIPATE IN OTHER NATO 1978 EXERCISES AND WILL THEREFORE SEEK TO SETTLE PERMANENTLY THE QUESTION OF COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS IN THE AREA.

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